United Nations E/2003/76

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 May 2003

Original: English

Substantive session of 2003
Geneva, 30 June-25 July 2003
Item 13 (d) of the provisional agenda*
Economic and environmental questions: human settlements

Coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

At its 41st plenary meeting, on 26 July 2002, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2002/38, entitled "Coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda". The present report is submitted pursuant to the request to the Secretary-General in paragraph 5 of resolution 2002/38 to submit a report to the Council at its 2003 session on the implementation of the resolution.

The report indicates that Governments have started to increase their support to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and encourages Governments to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution. It also shows that the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has strengthened its cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system and with local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners.

* E/2003/100.

03-37607 (E) 230603
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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to resolution 2002/38, entitled "Coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda", adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 26 July 2002. In paragraph 5 of resolution 2002/38 the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its 2003 session a report on the implementation of that resolution.

II. Progress on implementation

A. Funding

2. Governments have generally responded positively to the call to increase their contribution to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation. In 2002, the level of contributions to it reached an all-time record level of US$ 26 million and the indications for 2003 are that this level will be maintained. An area of concern remains the imbalance between earmarked (75%) and non-earmarked (25%) contributions. This makes it difficult for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to plan its financial commitments and to implement a focused work programme.

3. UN-Habitat has been developing its collaboration with the international financial institutions to encourage their support for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and of the Millennium Development Goal of achieving a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020. The Cities Alliance partnership between the World Bank and UN-Habitat, which has been joined by a number of bilateral donors and also recently by the Asian Development Bank, continues to provide an important forum for policy coordination and development, as well as providing support for the preparation of pro-poor city development strategies and slum upgrading programmes.

4. In addition UN-Habitat has been collaborating with other parts of the World Bank group. For example, building on the experience of the Water for African Cities programme, a wider framework of collaboration is being developed with the World Bank for expanded support to African cities, addressing the Millennium Development Goal in the area of water and sanitation. Also, with the support of the President of the World Bank, UN-Habitat has begun discussions with the International Finance Corporation to explore ways of leveraging private sector capital into slum upgrading and into low-cost shelter and infrastructure programmes serving the urban poor.

5. With regard to the regional development banks, UN-Habitat has recently concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Asian Development Bank under which the bank will provide $500 million in loans to Asian countries for pro-poor investments in water and sanitation. UN-Habitat has also recently concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Inter-American Development Bank that is expected to form the basis for enhanced future cooperation between the two organizations.

B. Partnerships

6. As a matter of strategic principle, all global programmes of UN-Habitat contribute to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Millennium Development Goals and other declarations and resolutions relating to sustainable urban development and shelter. All such programmes also promote and utilize partnerships as a strategic objective, put forward in the Habitat Agenda. The Partners and Youth Section of UN-Habitat was established in 2002 in order to maintain and enhance the gains achieved in working with partners at both the Habitat II, and Istanbul +5 conferences. The Section's tasks are twofold: (i) partners' engagement in the intergovernmental processes and global events of relevance to UN-Habitat and (ii) system-wide engagement of partners in UN-Habitat.

7. Deepening international cooperation among a wide range of partners requires continuous policy dialogue and new instruments for that purpose. These include increased coordination with other United Nations agencies, local authorities and various youth development programmes, and an expansion of strategies for resource mobilization. UN-Habitat currently provides various types of support to the international, national and grass-roots organizations of civil society that are engaged in the implementation of programmes and projects to improve living conditions in the urban environment. Furthermore, UN-Habitat is currently undertaking, or intends to undertake, the development of policy papers pertaining to youth, civil society organizations, local authorities and the business sector.

1. Cooperation with local authorities

8. The Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (ACLA) was established by the Executive Director in January 2000. In August 2002, in their political declaration to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, local authorities associations formally designated UN-Habitat as their link to the United Nations.

9. At the same time, technical collaboration with local authorities and their associations was facilitated through a number of UN-Habitat projects, global programmes and global campaigns. Prominent and successful among the new joint activities were the work on city-to-city cooperation and joint substantive preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, undertaken in response to resolution 18/10 of the Commission on Human Settlements, with close collaboration between UN-Habitat, the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities and the World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC).

10. Major achievements in this collaboration include: (a) the joint city-to-city activities, under the title "Partnership for local capacity development" and (b) city-to-city cooperation as the theme of the 2002 World Habitat Day.

11. The first World Urban Forum, held in Nairobi from 29 April to 3 May 2002, provided the opportunity, in an inclusive setting, to table some of the key issues which would have to be addressed by international guidelines on decentralization and local autonomy, to test reactions and modify and adjust the work accordingly.

12. A number of local authorities are directly supporting UN-Habitat activities, both technically and financially. The most prominent are Dubai Municipality, co-

organizer and sponsor of the Best Practice International Award; Fukuoka Municipality, supporting the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Rio Municipality, supporting the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean; and Barcelona Municipality, co-organizer of the second session of the World Urban Forum, scheduled to be held in September 2004.

2. Relations with non-governmental organizations

13. Significant events of an intergovernmental and international nature have served to strengthen the partnership between UN-Habitat and non-governmental organizations: the special session of the General Assembly (4-6 June 2001) for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul +5) facilitated the accreditation of an additional 450 NGOs to the existing 2,140 organizations affiliated to UN-Habitat during the Habitat II Conference of 1996 in Istanbul.

14. The first session of the World Urban Forum (29 April-3 May 2002) was well attended by the representatives of over 500 NGOs, who constituted half of the total participants at the event. One of the main outcomes of this participation was the establishment of an NGO Advisory Group to the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, to provide a platform for continuous dialogue for various partner groups on issues such as sustainable urbanization. Another important outcome was the establishment by Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian NGOs of a Civil Society Forum for UN-Habitat to strengthen the southern leg of the urban sector NGOs.

3. Partnership with civil society organizations

15. The Partners and Youth Section has been involved in developing the UN-Habitat policy statement on partnerships with civil society organizations, which will outline the major normative and programmatic efforts of UN-Habitat to engage civil society organizations more effectively. The main aim of this policy statement is to specify the focus and provide a general framework for an overall strategy for collaboration between civil society organizations and UN-Habitat. It is based on the commitments made in the Habitat Agenda and subsequent resolutions of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat, as well as at the General Assembly special session on Istanbul +5, that reinforced the facilitation of the active involvement of all stakeholders on human settlements issues. Its aim is also to clarify understanding of the "partnership concept" and of the function and nature of different actors of civil society. A further aim is to avoid the existing ambiguities in terms of various types of alliance among civil society stakeholders.

4. Relations with members of the private sector

16. UN-Habitat has had an ongoing partnership with the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) since 1995, prior to the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in Istanbul in 1996 (Habitat II). A positive initiative of the collaboration is that FIG has established the position of Director, FIG/UN Liaison. Another positive initiative is that FIG strongly desires to involve all of its commissions in the work of UN-Habitat. UN-Habitat will continue to participate in joint activities with FIG, as appropriate. Discussions are also under way with the World Economic Forum on the joint organization of a meeting with the private sector and financial institutions on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal relating to improvement of the lives of slum-dwellers.

17. In a pioneering relationship with the private sector, UN-Habitat has recently signed an agreement with the Environmental Science Research Institute (ESRI), the world's leading maker of geographic information system (GIS) software, whereby ESRI will supply, pro bono, up to 1,000 cities in developing countries with state-of-the-art GIS software and training. The main purpose will be to support the local collection, organization and analysis of urban indicators, including the slum indicators for the Millennium Development Goals. It is expected that in many of the cities that take advantage of the technical offer, GIS will become a standard management tool for municipal administration.

5. Relations with youth organizations and women's groups

18. *Initiatives for women's organizations*. The UN-Habitat Gender Unit has collaborated extensively with women's networks working on various issues of mutual interest and on international solidarity building for acceptable norms vis-à-vis gender equality. As part of gender mainstreaming in UN-Habitat, many of these partners are now integrated into UN-Habitat activities, especially the two global campaigns, where they participate in the steering committees and activities in the different regions and have contributed to the revision of the UN-Habitat gender policy, the formulation of position papers on women and urban governance, and women and secure tenure, as well as research work on women's right to land and property in East Africa.

19. The main method of outreach for the empowerment of women in human settlements is through the global women's networks that form part of the Huairou Commission. These networks include the Habitat International Council Women and Shelter Network (HICWAS), Grassroots Women Organizing Together in Sisterhood (GROOTS) and the International Council of Women (ICW). These networks aim to advance the capacity of grass-roots women worldwide to strengthen and create sustainable communities.

20. The women's networks partners of UN-Habitat are currently engaged in a wide range of activities to bring the concerns of grass-roots women into public decision-making and policy at a variety of levels. Activities currently include the Grassroots Women's International Academy (GWIA) for peer-group learning among communities in the North and South, and the "local-local dialogues" to activate grass-roots women's participation in local authority decision-making.

21. Women's organizations participated actively in the expert group meeting organized by UN-Habitat on gender mainstreaming in February 2003.

22. *Youth employment initiatives*. UN-Habitat hopes to support youth in skills and enterprise development in relation to the building and construction sector. The objective is to develop projects in five countries (3 in East Africa, 1 in Asia, 1 in Latin America) which will provide skills training and retraining, as well as training in enterprise development and setting up income-generating projects with regard to building and shelter construction. The final goal of the project is to assist young men and women to find gainful employment. UN-Habitat works closely with the Secretary-General's Youth Employment network and with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations Secretariat, in particular.

23. *Youth for Habitat International Network*. Youth for Habitat International Network is an umbrella organization which was initiated as a working group during the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995. Currently,

Youth for Habitat International Network has an operational secretariat, member youth organizations in more than 50 countries and several regional focal points and resource persons, and was involved in the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, in June 2001.

24. In the context of improving living conditions in human settlements, young people are working to take part in the formulation/implementation of policies and strategies particularly related to the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21. This situation is recognized and promoted in paragraph 120 (a) of the Habitat Agenda. Paragraph 120 (b) of the Habitat Agenda foresees youth playing an active and creative role in building sustainable communities. Paragraph 182 (n) of the Habitat Agenda further stipulates that youth should be accepted as a key partner for the implementation processes.

25. Youth for Habitat aims at contributing to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda by: awareness-raising about the Habitat Agenda as well as promoting youth perspectives in the implementation of these initiatives at the global, regional, national and local levels. It also helps with facilitating information exchange between its member organizations in relevant fields, networking, developing and implementing projects related to human settlements development, mobilizing the potential of youth, providing training and formulating models for the institutionalization of youth approaches.

C. Task Manager System

26. The idea of establishing a Habitat Agenda Task Manager System (HATMS) was an outcome of the preparatory process of the twenty-fifth special session of the General Assembly (Istanbul +5). In paragraph 66 of its Declaration on cities and other human settlements in the new millennium (resolution S-25/2 of 11 June 2001, annex) the General Assembly supported the establishment of the Habitat Agenda Task Manager System, designed to allow better monitoring and mutual enforcement of action taken by international agencies in support of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

27. UN-Habitat has developed key strategic principles, summarized below, in order to implement the Habitat Task Manager System:

(a) HATMS will be broad-based, involving all relevant United Nations agencies and Habitat Agenda partner groups, including local authorities and NGOs;

(b) HATMS will be action-oriented and issue-based, involving concrete partnership implementation commitments and associated monitoring;

(c) At the same time as it promotes the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, HATMS will also support an "urban window" for the implementation of other global agendas, such as the Millennium Development Goals and the outcome of the World Summit for Sustainable Development;

(d) HATMS will build on the biennial sessions of the World Urban Forum to review technically and coordinate the thematic elements of the Habitat Agenda in terms of approaches, achievements and future directions;

(e) HATMS will help UN-Habitat provide inputs to other coordination mechanisms within and outside the United Nations system, according to their relevance for the HATMS coordination and monitoring issue at hand. This will include such mechanisms as the Environmental Management Group, successor

arrangements for the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development, and the High Level Committee on Programmes.

28. UN-Habitat has started to implement elements of HATMS in accordance with the set of principles outlined above. Some examples are: (a) a partnership between UN-Habitat and the Statistical Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat on monitoring the implementation of target 11 of the Millennium Development Goals on slum upgrading; (b) the 11 partnerships in the Coalition for Sustainable Urbanization, aimed at implementing the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development; (c) the Partnership for Local Capacity Development, designed to promote cohesion and collective efficiency in the international support available for the development of local capacities for sustainable urbanization; (d) implementation and monitoring partnerships developed in the context of UN-Habitat global programmes and two global campaigns, for good urban governance and secure tenure respectively; (e) the launch of the World Urban Forum, with its first session in Africa (Nairobi, 2002) and future sessions agreed for Europe (Barcelona, 2004), America (Vancouver, 2006) and under discussion for Asia (2008).

D. Collaboration with United Nations system entities

29. UN-Habitat has increased its participation in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) at different levels. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat participates in the heads of agencies meetings of UNDG. Other staff members participate in the UNDG Support Group and Programme Group, and in other relevant meetings. This has paved the way to a more productive and effective collaboration with United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and country teams in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration.

30. UNDG has been strengthening coordination among UNDG organizations and with the United Nations system at large in order to increase quality and effectiveness of programme collaboration at the country level towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, in the light of the United Nations reform process and as mandated to the UNDG by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/201 on the triennial comprehensive policy review.

31. UNDG has developed a core strategy for Millennium Development Goals and prepared a mapping of UNDG members' contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This has given higher visibility to human settlements issues, with particular reference to the United Nations millennium development target of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020 and the challenge of halving the rapidly growing urban demand for safe water and adequate sanitation by 2015.

32. The Millennium Development Goals were integrated into new guidelines for the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and linkages between CCA/UNDAF, the Millennium Development Goals and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers were clarified. Guidelines for the CCA and UNDAF were revised on the basis of General Assembly resolution 56/201 and the Millennium Declaration and Millennium

Development Goals, and were disseminated to UNDG members and all United Nations country teams.

33. This has enabled UN-Habitat to intensify its efforts and to enhance its operational role by pursuing a stronger presence at the country level. UN-Habitat has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and has already started to post Habitat programme managers within selected UNDP country offices. This should assist the Resident Coordinator system in providing both national and international expertise in incorporating a specific chapter on shelter, sustainable human settlements and urban poverty in the CCA and UNDAF.

34. UN-Habitat has also increased its cooperation with the World Bank in the framework of the Cities Alliance initiative, launched in 1999 by the two organizations, and with UNEP in the framework of the Sustainable Cities Programme.

III. Recommendations

35. **Governments that are in a position to do so are encouraged to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution in order to facilitate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the new millennium and the relevant commitments of the Millennium Declaration, particularly the commitment to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020.**

36. **Governments are encouraged to facilitate furthering of partnerships at the national and local levels with civil society organizations, local authorities and the business sector in implementing the Habitat Agenda and the relevant targets of the Millennium Development Goals.**

37. **With the aim of enabling urban youth to participate fully in the social, economic and cultural spheres and of promoting good governance at the city level, Governments should support UN-Habitat in scaling up its youth programme, especially in Africa as a point of commencement, in close cooperation with other United Nations agencies, such as the International Labour Organization, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in the fields of youth employment and crime prevention.**

38. **Members of United Nations country teams working on CCA and UNDAF, together with the national partners, should call upon UN-Habitat to include issues pertaining to shelter, sustainable human settlements and urban poverty in their preparation of the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).**